

BUS & COACH BUYER

10 APRIL 1992

ISSUE 150

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Alexander buyout completed

Mellor sold to management



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Alexander complete buyout

The management team of coachbuilder Walter Alexander has bought out the company, demerging it from Spotlaunch plc which bought the entire Walter Alexander Group two years ago. The buyout has been led by chief executive, Ian Galloway, deputy MD, Nigel McGaughey and Nick Chalmers, finance director with the support of a group of predominantly Scottish based institutional investors.

Ian Galloway confirmed that, 'the intent to separate the Alexander coachbuilding businesses from the other interests and activities of the Walter Alexander Group was an integral part of the Spotlaunch takeover in 1990. Since then, the industry has gone through some extremely difficult times and for a while our main concern was survival.

However I am pleased to report that, although the industry still has problems, Alexander entered 1992 with an order book in excess of £20 million.'

The company employs 665 people at its plants in Falkirk and Belfast and claims to be the biggest bus bodybuilder in the UK, exporting over 50% of its output. Plans for the future include: a modest programme of investment in machinery and computer equipment to improve productivity and customer service; further strengthening of the team; a product design and development programme; market research to identify customer needs in the short and medium term and closer integration of the Falkirk and Belfast plants, especially in product development and procurement.

Mellor MBO

Mellor Coachcraft and Coleman Milne have been acquired from Plaxton Group plc in a £2.3 million management buyout. The buyout team consists of: Geoff Lockyer, MD of Coleman Milne; Les Proctor, general manager of Mellor; Geoff Hudson, Mellor's production manager and Brian Blincoe, financial director of both concerns. The deal was negotiated by Price Waterhouse Corporate Finance in Manchester with finance provided by Barclays Industrial Development and Midland Bank.

Mellor Coachcraft have modern factory premises in Rochdale and employ 54 people producing around 300 coachbuilt and converted vehicles on minibus chassis annually. They are active in both the PSV and welfare markets and also undertake specialist tasks. Coleman Milne manufacture limousines, hearses and executive cars and employ around 100 staff at their premises in West Haughton, near Bolton.

Pre-book for Flower Parade

Operators sending parties to the Spalding Flower Parade on the weekend of 2/3 May will save time and effort by pre-booking coaches into the main charity car parks. Both parks have toilet and refreshment facilities and are convenient for both Spalding town centre and Springfields Gardens, though both are a fair walk for the elderly.

Holbeach Round Table's coach park is situated at the junction of Queens Road and Low Road on the parade route. Open from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm, it costs £5.00 in advance and cheques should be made payable to Holbeach Round Table and sent to Steve Cole, Bus & Coach Buyer, The Publishing Centre, Low Road, Spalding, Lincs PE12 6ED.

Spalding Lions will be providing parking on the Geest site in West Marsh Road. This will open at 8.00 am and will cost £7.00 per coach. Anyone wishing to book in advance should contact David Baldwin, Pamona House, Holbeach Road, Spalding PE12 6JP. Telephone (0775) 725717.



The first Van Hool Eos 200 to be delivered to a UK operator is now in operation with Scarlet Band Coaches of County Durham. Scarlet Band have specified a 360bhp MAN power unit after positive experiences of operating Van Hool integral coaches with MAN engines. The specification includes 53 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, video, boiler, fridge, driver's door and power operated centre continental door. Painted white with yellow and red bands, the coach has the appropriate registration, J200EOS. It was supplied by Van Hool UK Ltd.

Coach stolen and vandalised

A 29 seater Plaxton bodied Bedford belonging to R & M Kerr of Irvine was stolen and later vandalised on 4 April. The vehicle was taken from outside a hotel and discovered 40 miles away in a supermarket car park the following day. Radio, PA equipment, fire extinguisher and first aid kit had all been removed and substantial

damage done to seating and trim. Vandals thought not necessarily to be connected with the thieves are thought to be responsible for the majority of the interior damage as well as releasing the handbrake and allowing the vehicle to career into a wall. An assessment of the damage has priced the repair work at around £5,500.



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Sanders buy Bammants

Sanders Coaches of Holt, Norfolk, have acquired the business premises and vehicle stock of Fakenham based Bammants Coaches from 1 March 1992. The workforce have all been absorbed into the new operation and no jobs have been lost. Sanders have taken 15 of Bammants 18 vehicles which raises their fleet size from 47 to 62.

Charles Sanders told B&CB, "The owner of Bammants was ready to retire and so we took the opportunity to expand our operation. Bammants ran a similar programme to our own, tours, excursions, local bus, school contracts and private hires, so it is really just a simple extension of our business. We have taken the lease on Bammants premises and so the vehicles will remain based in Fakenham. I don't see any reason to change things and there are no plans to rationalise the operation."

More minis for Clydeside 2000

Paisley based Clydeside 2000 which was formerly part of the Scottish Bus Group has purchased 16 secondhand minibuses for new routes and fleet updating. From Stagecoach subsidiary Fife have come six 1987 (E) Renault S56 Alexander 25 seaters of which four will be based at Greenock and two at Paisley.

From Rider York's Target Travel operation have come 10 Reeve Burgess Beaver 23 seaters dating from 1990. Within seven days collection all ten were repainted and in service on new services from the Semphill area of Inchinnan to Glasgow and Paisley. Rider York's sale of these vehicles reduces its minibus fleet to 14 vehicles, compared with a figure of 80 at the inception of the company in July 1990.

SMMT FIGURES MARCH REGISTRATIONS BUS & COACHES

Manufacturer	March 92	March 91	Year to Date 92	Year to Date 91
DAF BUS	17	12	44	16
LEYLAND DAF	6	2	14	14
(TOTAL DAF)	(23)	(14)	(58)	(30)
DENNIS	53	23	166	119
DUPLE	0	0	1	2
IVECO	0	0	0	1
MAN/VOLKSWAGEN	2	0	3	0
OPTARE	18	1	40	30
SCANIA	21	39	58	64
VOLVO (SW)	82	130	145	239
VOLVO (GB)	17	34	59	141
(TOTAL VOLVO)	(99)	(164)	(204)	(380)
OTHER BRITISH	0	0	0	4
OTHER IMPORTS	15	15	30	52
TOTAL BRITISH	88	58	266	296
TOTAL IMPORTS	143	198	294	386
GRAND TOTAL	231	256	560	682

March registrations are only down by 25 on the figures for the same month last year. Overall, the market has fallen by 122 vehicles this year with Scania and Volvo bearing the brunt of the decline. All other major manufacturers are increasing their share in the diminished market place.

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1988 Scania K112 Plaxton Paramount 3500, 49 str, toilet, TV, video, drinks, conti door, drivers berth, current MoT, choice of 2.....

£65,000

1988 Freight Rover, 20 seater, bus spec, current MoT

£7,500

1983 DAF MB 200 DKTL LAG Galaxy, 53 recliners, current MoT.....

£23,500

1983 MAN SR280, 46 seater, toilet and servery.....

£22,000

1982 Volvo Jonckheere Bermuda, 49 seater, toilet, seats recovered

£25,000

1982 Volvo B10M Duple Goldliner, 49 seater, toilet, current MoT

£21,000

1981 VOLVO B58, 12m Duple Dominant, 53 seater, MoT October 1992

£19,000

1980 DAF Plaxton 12m, 53 recliners, MoT 9th September, 1992

£15,000

1979 Leyland Leopard Duple Dominant, 53 retrimmed seats, MoT June 1992

£11,000

1979 Volvo B58 Duple Dominant II, 49 E Type and courier, MoT July 1992..

£15,000

1977 AEC Plaxton, 53 seater

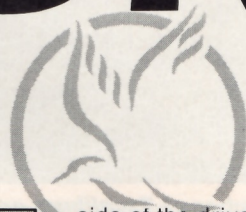
£5,750

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Manufacturer Focus

PLAXTON

COACH & BUS



You've probably noticed the first production examples of Plaxton's new Premiere and Excalibur ranges which have begun taking to the roads over the last two months. Output from the plant is currently running at around 15 coaches a week as the company works flat out to supply customers for the 1992 season. Stuart Jones has been to Scarborough where he found the criticisms levelled at pre-production NEC show examples had been taken on board and sorted out.

Sat in the showroom facility awaiting collection were two Excaliburs on Volvo B10M chassis in the colours of Parks of Hamilton. Parks are promoting themselves as Park's Motor Group - Scotland's Driving Force and the amended grey, red and silver livery that has been adopted set the coaches off to advantage. Kevin Wood, marketing manager, had been telling me for months that I would be impressed with the changes made on the production vehicles and I was eager to see whether he was right.

As soon as I got on board it was clear that these vehicles were very different from the ones I had seen at the launch and at the NEC show. Once I had got over the visual shock of Park's grey with red, blue, yellow and pink moquette selection, I set about the vehicle with a critical eye. Plaxton have started placing the seat numbers on the moulded side casings of each pair of seats, a good idea because it overcomes the confusion that can occur if they are placed on the racks or the back of seats. I liked the idea but I thought the execution could have been a little tidier. I wasn't happy with the long term durability of the sticky backed plastic warning notices used at the rear of the coach which looked tempor-



One of the Wallace Arnold Premiere 350s nearing completion.

ary and probably were, and I thought the finish on the moulded top to the toilet unit could be a little better. That's got the negatives out of the way, now I can concentrate on telling you how positively impressed I was with the changes made since the NEC.

Judicious prodding of and leaning on the moulded dash showed that the whole unit was now far more substantial. Thicker mouldings have been used to provide the necessary stiffness without losing any of

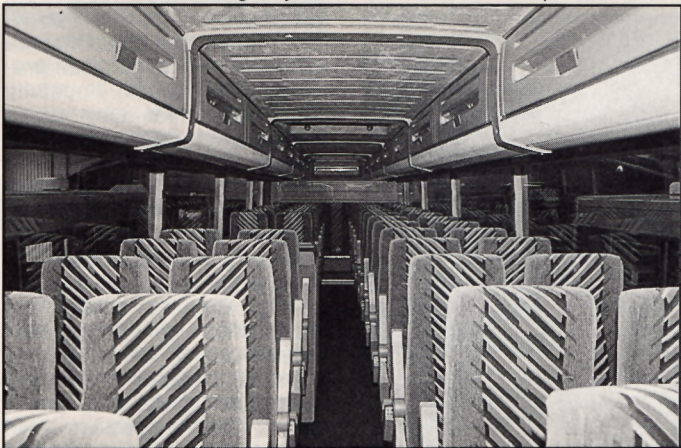
the visual appeal. I am not personally a fan of black dashboards because I prefer something lighter and more welcoming but faced with calls for it from potential customers, Plaxton have now made the Henry Ford option available across the range in addition to the grey and beige already offered. I thought the driver's instrument panel a neat and functional design. Greater use of vacuum formed plastics has been made to cover the side window pillars and to form the pocket at the

side of the driver.

When I first saw the new ranges I was pleased to see that Plaxton had moved towards European practices by utilising moulded interior roof panels. Those on the prototypes were rather too flexible but with improved fixing methods these problems have been overcome. Indeed the roof and rack layout gives the Excalibur a very spacious feel, a considerable advance on the Paramount 3500. I like the way a locker has been incorporated at the rear of the aisle over the back row of seats. Parks have taken up the option of a video unit integrated into the space between the racks at the front of the coach. To my mind this was one of the neatest video installations I have ever seen, it looked part of the coach, rather than a bolt-on afterthought.

Mention of the racks brings me to the rack locker doors which are standard on the Excalibur and an option on the Premiere 350. I had been critical of the inconsistent surface finish on early examples but those on the Parks vehicles were uniform in appearance and shut with a firm clunk. One is always concerned that they are something else which will need to be maintained, but the units and the mechanisms are both substantial and should prove robust in service.

Plaxton have made extensive use of a material called Quintesse in trimming the interior of the Excalibur, and to a lesser extent in the Premiere. This has a smoother softer feel than the carpet like material previously used for side panels and my feeling is that it adds to the perceived quality of the coach. In comparison with prototype Excaliburs, the use of Quintesse has been extended to such areas as the driver's window pillars and



Parks of Hamilton have selected a brightly coloured moquette for their Excaliburs. Note the substantial locker doors and the head lining which is now far more firmly mounted.

Manufacturer Focus



One of a number of Excaliburs on Volvo B10M chassis in the new Park's Motor Group colours.

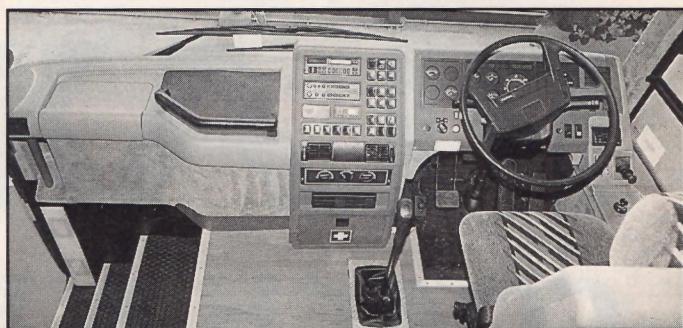
part of the back of the entrance door which previously had a large area of unrelieved plastic. Some operators told me at the NEC that they thought the new interiors contained too much plastic, and on the vehicles with the plastic backed seats I agreed with them. I feel sure that seeing the coaches leaving the factory now, operators would be unlikely to level the same criticisms.

At the launch of the range, much was made of the benefits of the relatively new process of resin transfer moulding (RTM) which was to be used for all lower body paneling on Premiere and Excalibur. The new panels offer benefits in weight, strength, impact resistance and ease of replacement, but in the start up period Plaxton were not happy with the consistency of quality off the tooling. Under the circumstances it was decided to concentrate efforts on perfecting the tooling for the more vulnerable front and rear sections where the RTM process will offer the greatest benefits. It had always been

the intention to supply low volume models with aluminium lower side panels, but in the light of the problems faced all production vehicles are being fitted with aluminium side panels manufactured in a similar way to Paramount. Managing director, Neil Beresford commented, 'The RTM process is a fundamentally sound one which we remain committed to.'

The setbacks experienced delayed the build schedule but Plaxton have done everything humanly possible to recover the programme, including taking on in excess of 100 additional people to expedite deliveries and respond to demand for the product.

Wallace Arnold were already operating 18 of a total order of 62 vehicles when I spoke to operations director, Stephen Barber. He commented, 'We are pleased with them both from the passenger and driver point of view. We have had a good response from passengers. Other than normal teething troubles we've found nothing to complain about. There has certainly been no



The dash mouldings are now made of much more substantial GRP than previously.

theme of problems.'

The Wallace Arnold vehicle requirement was for a mix of vehicles, all but one of them on Volvo B10M chassis, the odd man out being a Dennis Javelin GX with Premiere 350 coachwork. Twenty five Premiere 350s will be used for continental touring with 10 Excaliburs and the rest of the Premieres occupied on UK work. The entire order will be delivered by the end of May. Wallace Arnold selected Holdsworth velour materials for the interior and rack facings to match their brown, yellow and orange striped moquette.

This article concentrates on the changes made to the range but it should not be forgotten that Plaxton have made strides forward in safety terms that other European body manufacturers have yet to make. Both Excalibur and Premiere meet the stiff ECE R66 rollover regulations and the seats and seatbelts/ anchorages meet the requirements of ECE R80 and R14 respectively. Greater safety is not an easy feature to sell, especially for an industry with such a good safety record, but the benefits of the stiffer structure should also mean that the body will last longer than previous designs and hopefully enjoy better residual values because of this. Aerodynamically the more streamlined shape should lead to lower fuel consumption figures in comparison with earlier Plaxton designs. Independent fuel tests at MIRA showed Premiere and Excalibur giving one mpg better fuel economy than Paramount.

Large advance orders for fleet customers may have given the impression that Plaxton is only interested in fleet deals, but this is far from true. As I walked through the factory the first Excalibur Excel as nearing completion for

Anderson of Horsforth, complete with toilet, video, drivers bunk and drinks facilities. Other independent operators to order include Jones of Login, Dodsworths and Tappins. To date examples have been ordered on Volvo, Scania, Dennis and DAF chassis. The Premiere 350 is the first high floor body to be offered on the Dennis Javelin chassis.

At present the new range is only available on 12 metre chassis but development work is being undertaken on other model possibilities. I understand a 10 metre design on the Volvo B9M or Dennis Javelin is likely to become available before any 11 metre options, if there is sufficient demand.

If you want an Excalibur or a Premiere, there will be a small number available from dealer stock by the end of April, the first examples being Premieres on Volvo chassis and an Excalibur on a Scania K113. All Plaxton dealers have committed to limited numbers of stock vehicles, around 40 between them.

Exports

Some operators may have seen the 3.7 metre high Plaxton Prestige on the Volvo B12R chassis which was exhibited at the Kortrijk show last year. Sales Director - Coach, Clive Hodgson, told me, 'We are working very closely with Volvo France on developing the vehicle. They have received the product very enthusiastically, I believe it has true export potential.'

At present there are no plans to bring the design into the UK because British legislation precludes it being offered on two axles.

Plaxton 425

Those who are enthusiastic about operating the Duple 425 will be pleased with Plaxton's decision to retain the model. A



The interior of a Wallace Arnold Premiere 350 which was nearing completion. Facings are in Holdsworth velour rather than the attractive Quintesse material which is standard. The rack locker doors are an option on the Premiere 350.

Manufacturer Focus



The interior of the Plaxton 425 showing the new angled racks and Plaxton reclining seats.

dozen vehicles were built at the Lorraine plant before the decision to close it was made, and these were trimmed, finished and fitted with seats at Scarborough.

Though the familiar windcheating styling is retained, some welcome changes have been made to the specification to further enhance its appeal. In place of the cable gearchange there is a new air assisted rigid rod system which is said to give a particularly smooth and positive change. The brakes have been uprated and so has the heating and ventilation system. One change I believe will be welcome is the standardisation on Bode equipment for both the plug door and door tower mechanisms, a move that should guarantee reliability.

There are a number of other changes, the most visually apparent being a new rack design on which the underside of the rack is angled quite sharply towards the centre of the aisle. Plaxton reclining seats are fitted and all moquette is by Holdsworth. The standard specification is 53 recliners, courier seat, centre continental door and provision for toilet. Optionally an operator can have 55 restricted recline seats or 57 restricted recliners if the continental entrance is sealed off. A 53/57 configuration is a possibility.

The Cummins L10 290bhp unit is standard along with an eight speed ZF transmission, ABS braking and Telma. The first example has already been sold to Western Scottish Buses where it will join three early Duple examples that have proved extremely reliable and economical. Available from Kirkby Coach & Bus, the Plaxton 425 costs

from £114,500 plus VAT. One will be displayed at the Brighton Coach rally.

Paramount

The introduction of the Premiere and Excalibur will mean the discontinuation of single deck versions of the Paramount range, but not just yet. Bus Eireann had standardised on the Paramount 3500 for its coaching requirements in recent years and has ordered 20 more of the model on DAF MB230 chassis in order to maintain that standardisation. A further order for two similar DAF Paramounts has been taken from Ulsterbus.

The double and twin deck Paramount 4000 series remains a current option for the small number of operators requiring coaches of this configuration.

Bus

Demand for service buses is, to say the least, depressed, but Plaxton are very pleased to be taking an increasing share of the limited market. The Verde body has been a critical success and with the delivery of 14 to Cardiff and production about to start on a batch of 40 on DAF SB220 chassis for Bus Atha Cliath, Dublin, the design can truly be said to be taking off. Managing director Neil Beresford remains convinced of Verde's potential and says, 'We believe it is the right long term product.'

If Verde has been slow to win orders, the same cannot be said of the Reeve Burgess Pointer which is constructed using the same techniques. In only a year since it was launched it has attracted well over 250 orders, the biggest of many customers being the London Transport subsidiaries. To date all have been



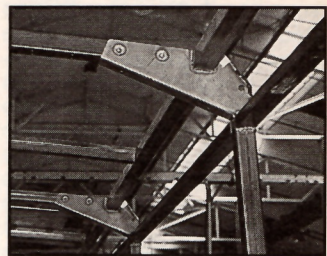
Some of the latest London Dart orders must be confusing for Plaxton employees as they are both Pointers and Harriers.

supplied on the Dennis Dart chassis but the first B6R is already being bodied at Scarborough. Many of the Pointer's customers have previously bought Beaver bodied minibuses and gone on to try the model's big brother. As B&CB found last week, the Beaver remains a popular vehicle and has lost none of its appeal following the move to Scarborough from Pilsley.

Order early for 1993

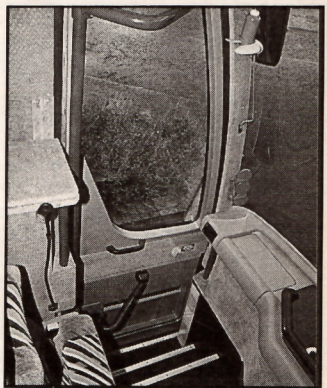
Plaxton's order books look healthy through the summer though the market for all products continues to be depressed with no sign of pick-up. Neil Beresford is pleased that Plaxton continues to increase its share of the dwindling market, supplying 53% of coaches in 1991, a figure he looks to maintain in 1992.

He foresees a new problem for operators accustomed to ordering vehicles from stock in the early months of the year, there may not be many to order. Neil commented, 'In this climate, dealers aren't prepared to commit to large numbers, and frankly I don't blame them. It wouldn't surprise me if that wasn't the way of the future. Dealers will



The body framing structure is extremely robust and meets the ECE R66 rollover requirements.

plan ahead to minimise their exposure and operators will have to plan their buying requirements much more carefully and further in advance. Late buying of stock is a thing of the past.'



The interior layout in the door area of the Excalibur.



This prototype Premiere 320 on a Dennis Javelin chassis has been sold to Western Scottish and will be repainted in Citylink colours.

Rally Report

S.E.C.O.A. Coaching Weekend

1992 seems to be the year for coach rallies returning to the scene of past glories. With the support of Shepway District Council, The South Eastern Coach Operators Association's Coaching Weekend was once more held in Folkestone where it had regularly taken place in the early 1980s. If the British Coach Rally is as successful on its return to Brighton as the SECOA Coaching Weekend was on its return to Folkestone, it will be well worth attending.

The SECOA rally is rather different to the Blackpool and Brighton events in that only members of the Association can compete. Though everybody tries to win the many trophies, somehow it seems more important to take part than to carry off the awards. The other major difference is that the emphasis is on working coaches rather than newly delivered vehicles, none of this year's entries were 'J' registered and the oldest coach dated from 1937.

There are six vehicle classes covering: buses; minibuses and minicoaches; pre 1983 coaches; 1983-83 coaches; 1986-88 coaches and 1989-91 coaches. The top award is the Thanet Cup which is awarded to the vehicle gaining the most



The SECOA equivalent of the Coach Of The Year award is the Thanet Cup which was won by this MAN 10.190 Berkhof Excellence 1000 Midi belonging to the Kingsferry.

points in any of those classes. This went to a Berkhof Excellence 1000 Midi bodied MAN10.190 belonging to The Kingsferry which also won the Chapman Stevens Cup for the continental coach gaining the highest number of points, the Blue Rambler Cup for the best 1989-91 vehicle and the Joe Reed Cup for the most attractive vehicle based on the general layout of signwriting together with the exterior and interior livery scheme. Driver John Witney also won the Olau Line Cup for the driver with the best continental knowledge from Ray Austin of Nu Venture.

Beaten by only two points into the runners up position to take the Arlington Cup was

Wally Smith's beautiful 1937 Park Royal bodied Leyland Tiger which Wally spent four years restoring to PSV standard. It was the deserved winner of the Sealink Cup for the best pre 1983 vehicle and was runner up for the Joe Reed Cup. Runner up was Rambler's 1967 Bedford VAM Duple Viceroy which had won the event in 1983 and took the Duple Cup in 1992. Wally Smith was also runner up to Brian Horlock for the Setra Shield for the operator/manager with the best continental knowledge. His son, David Smith, won the Folkestone Cup for the best overall driving performance from an operator with Brian Horlock second.

The Kingsferry also won the Moseley Cup for the best ser-

vice bus with their open top ex Southdown Leyland PD with Poynters Leyland National in the runners up spot. Kingsferry driver Peter Padbury took the Bedford Tankard for the best presented driver beating Ray Austin of Nu Venture.

Scotland & Bates of Apple-dore always seem to win something and this year it was the Canterbury Cup for the best 1983-85 coach with a Volvo B10M Plaxton 3200 that also took the Plaxton trophy. Nu Venture came second in the 1983-85 class with a Plaxton 3500 bodied Leyland Royal Tiger and deservedly won the Sally Line Cup for the company which, in the Committee's decision, had made the most effort with their entry.

A Mercedes belonging to Roy Tours was judged to be the best minibus and a Peugeot Talbot Express from Crystals was runner up. Jim Gibson drove the latter vehicle to win the Lehan Cup for the best minibus driver.

The driving competitions are staged on the Sunday morning and involved precisely negotiating five different stages. Best among the drivers was Darren Marchant of Lewis Meridian Coaches with Ray Austin of Nu Venture close behind. The Operators Derby for the New Enterprise Tankard was won by Chris



Overall runner-up and winner of the Arlington Cup was Wally Smith's magnificent 1937 Park Royal bodied Leyland Tiger.



A former winner of the SECOA rally, Rambler's Bedford VAM Duple Viceroy won the Duple Cup.

Rally Report



I was impressed with the presentation of this Plaxton 3500 bodied Leyland Royal Tiger which was judged by the committee to have won the Sally Line Cup.

Lewis with Bob Charlton of F Scott & Daughters finishing runner up.

The SECOA committee thanked the sponsors: Euro Tunnel; Bell Glass; Volvo; Kassbohrer UK; Silkolene; Scania Coach Sales; Sally Ferries; Plaxton Coach & Bus; Bus & Coach Insurance Services; Hythe Tyres; Uniroyal Continental Group and Auto-smart, who provided the financial assistance which helped make the rally possible. A Plaxton Excalibur bodied



Scotland & Bates' Volvo B10M Plaxton Paramount won the Canterbury Cup for the best 1983-85 vehicle and also the Plaxton Trophy.

Volvo B10M carried out several demonstration runs and was also used to convey those attending the rally to the Eurotunnel Exhibition Centre for a free tour.

SECOA welcomes new members from within the south eastern area. In addition to organising the coaching weekend, the association holds regular monthly meetings to which speakers are invited, and also organises educational visits. It is a friendly organisation and the spirit in

which the weekend's proceedings took place reflected this. Even the chairman of Shepway District Council, Huxley Williams, joined in the fun, judging and trying his hand behind the wheel in the driving tests.

In previous years Graham Searles of Hextable Coaches has always put up a good performance in the competitions. Graham wasn't well enough to compete this year but he was present on crutches on the Sunday morning and we join



Darren Marchant receives the ICT Cup from Huxley Williams, Chairman of Shepway District Council.

SECOA members in wishing him a speedy recovery.

Finally, there is the Clanger Award, presented to the operator owning up to having done the daftest things during the year. Joint winners were Wally Smith, for showing off his new coin counting machine without putting any bags in to collect the money, and his daughter Angie Smith for presenting her driving instructor with her house keys instead of the keys to his car.

**by
Stuart Jones**

Carlton P.S.V.

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Fleet Additions



Three Pointer bodied Dennis Darts have been supplied to Welsh operator D Coaches for use on Dyfed County Council contract services. Supplied by Plaxton Coach & Bus, all three are 9.8 metre versions fitted with 40 seats, luggage pens and have a standee capacity of 18. They also meet DiPTAC requirements, having split entrance steps, textured handrails and palm operated bell pushes.

The D Coaches operation was started by Daryll Davies in 1964 with one bus and has since grown to include 69 buses and coaches running from bases in Ammanford and Swansea. The company has its own ABTA bonded travel centre and runs UK and continental tours under the Diamond Tours banner.



Eight Wright Handybuses have been delivered to Essex based County Bus & Coach. They are an equal mixture of 35 seat 9.0 metre and 40 seat 9.8 metre Dennis Darts for a variety of duties. Two have extensive DiPTAC features, funded by Essex County Council, for town service in Grays. Two more are for use on LT tendered services and the remainder will operate tendered and commercial services in Hertfordshire. All eight have been fitted with soft trim and feature the single piece front windscreen.



Scania duo for Westerham

Westerham Coaches have added a pair of Plaxton Paramount 3500 Scania K113 CRB coaches to their fleet. Finished to three star specification, the coaches are fitted with 51 reclining seats, Sutrak air conditioning, toilets, refrigerators, water boilers, video systems and double glazing. Chassis specification includes full air suspension, DSC11 320 bhp engines, Scania GS772 ten speed gearboxes, ABS braking, Telma Focal retarders, exhaust brakes, brake system air dryers and automatic slack adjusters. They were supplied by Scania Coach Sales.

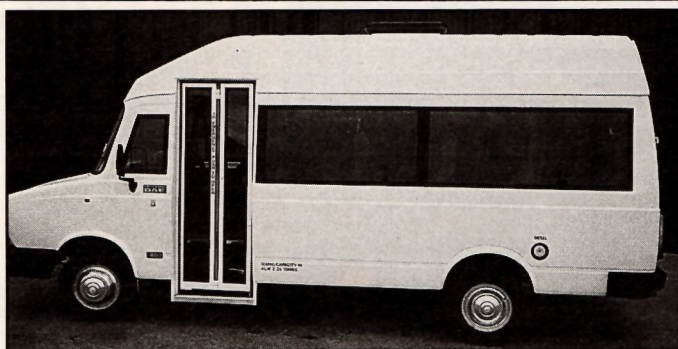


Aztec Coach Travel, part of Myrtle Tree Holdings in Bristol has taken delivery of another Jonckheere P599 Deauville. The new coach is a 51 seater based on an MAN 16.290 chassis. The Aztec directors are pictured collecting the vehicle from Arthur Humphries of Jonckheere UK.



Pointers on parade

Maidstone and District Motor Services have purchased three Pointer bodied Dennis Darts from Plaxton Coach & Bus. They are the first new single deck vehicles to join the company since 1977 and are being used on tendered services linking Chatham with Sittingbourne. The 9.8 metre Pointers are equipped with 40 seats and have a standee capacity for 17 passengers. Extensive DiPTAC specification has been included as the vehicles provide an important link with Medway Hospital. The drivers have all been given special training in assisting passengers with disabilities.



Caremore Cars of St Helens have recently this Leyland DAF 400 series minicoach from Crystals Conversions. It features an electric Bi-fold door and is equipped with 16 Kustombilt Capri seats, tinted highline windows, saloon heater, soft trim, quadvent and stainless steel wheel trims.



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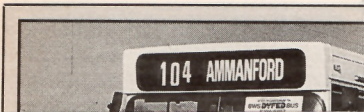
1984 A Reg YNT PARAMOUNT, 53 E types, tested 9.1.93, vgc, **£22,500 or offers.** Also 1977 YMT Caetano, vgc, new test, **£3,000.** Tel: 0507 473236. 150/3848/BED

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1982 DAF MB 200, 12m Plaxton VGT, 51 seater, tinted windows, toilet, courier seat, tested until end of May 1992, owner driven. **£22,000 + VAT.** Southend (0702) 540456 150/3920/DAF

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1977 FORD 360, 53 seater, MoT March '93, taxed, good reliable runner **£2,200. Tel: 051-480 8425**
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19 seats, radio, 12 months MoT, painted to customer's colour

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1988 Volvo B10M Plaxton 3500

Full executive, 51 reclining seats, wired for TV, video & coffee machine, MoT March '92

Choice of two

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Full executive, 49 reclining seats, wired for TV, video and coffee machine, excellent condition, MoT March '93

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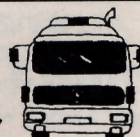
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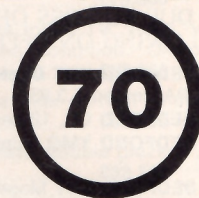
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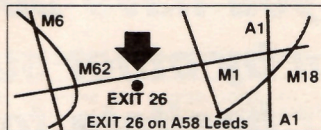
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